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SUID

# AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEKE



*Driemaandeliks Uitgegee deur die  
SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEEKVERENIGING  
Geredigeer vanuit die W. N. N. R., Pretoria*

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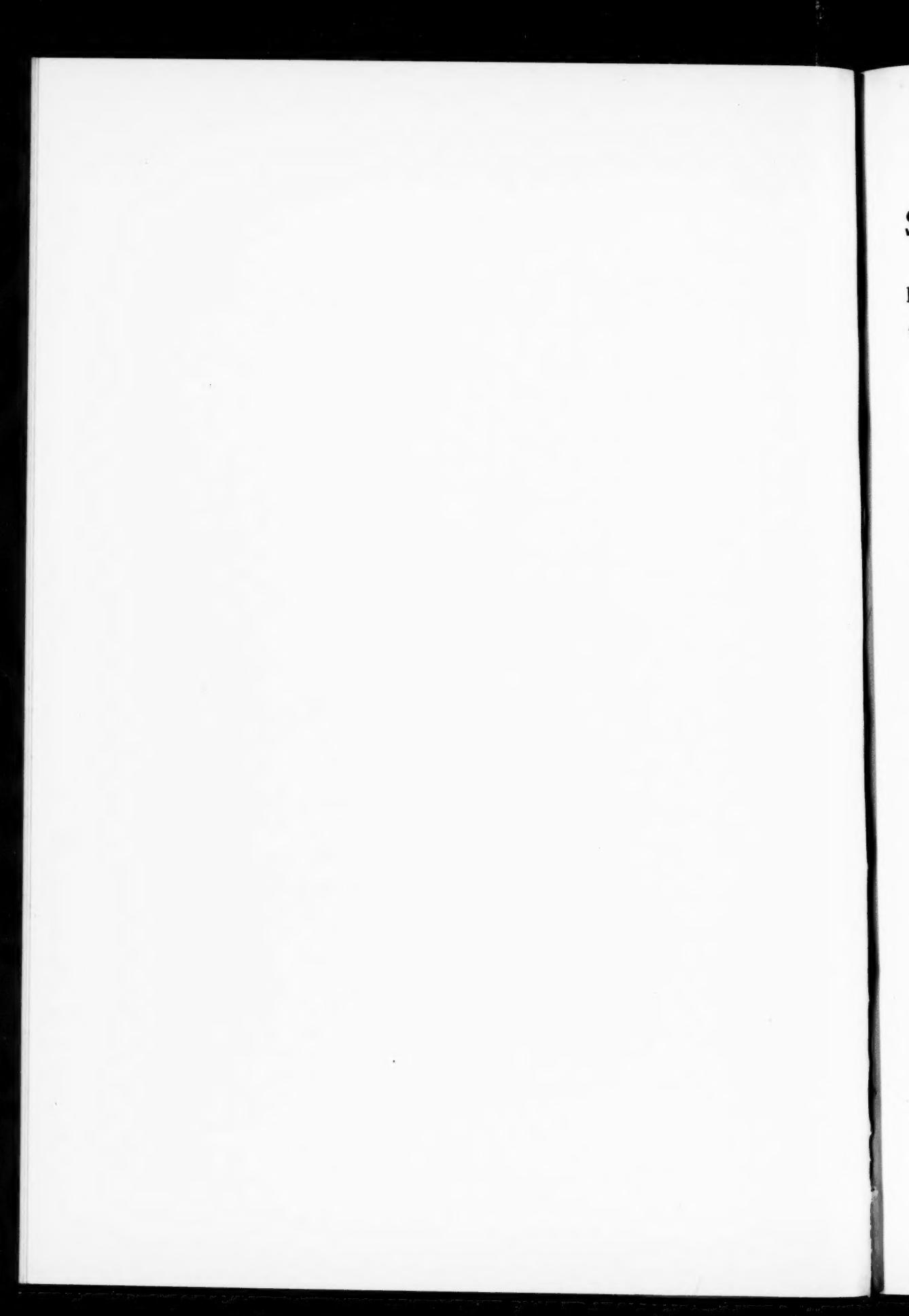
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DEEL 17

JANUARIE 1950

NO. 3



# SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEKE

*Die Offisiële Orgaan van die Suid-Afrikaanse Biblioteekvereniging*

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## STAATSBIBLIOTEKE

IN 1937 het die Inter-departementelege Komitee oor Biblioteke van die Unie van Suid-Afrika verklaar : „In die algemene organisasie van die Goewerment se departementelege biblioteke is daar in 'n sekere mate 'n gebrek aan sisteem en koördinasie wat besuiniging en nuttigheid nie in die hand werk nie. . . . Die aandag van die Staatsdienskommisie word bepaal by die noodsaklikheid om spesiale regulasies op te trek wat aanstellings tot poste in departementelege biblioteke sal beheer.“ Die oorlog het intussen gekom en nie veel is hieraan gedoen nie totdat in 1944 'n algemene inspeksie van biblioteke deur die Staatsdienskommisie gelas is. Inspekteur Viljoen se aanbevelings, later gerugsteun deur die *Centlivres-verslag*<sup>1</sup>, het in 1947 uitgeloop op 'n spesiale gradering van biblioteekpersoneel en die vasstelling van minimum professionele vereistes.<sup>2</sup> Dit het ook gelei tot die skepping van die pos van Hoofbibliotekaris om die verskillende biblioteke te koördineer. Hierdie beampte, wat aan die Departement van Unie-Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap verbonde is, is in geen besondere biblioteek werksaam nie maar streewe daarna om elke biblioteek onbevooroordelik en regverdiglik te dien. Hy vorm ook die skakel tussen die biblioteekgroep en die owerheid. Alle biblioteeksake geniet sy aandag en die verwagting is dat hy ook gemoeid sal wees met die opbouing van 'n gesamentlike katalogus van publikasies in die Staatsdiens.

Bogemelde verwikkellings getuig van besliste vooruitgang en is sonder twyfel in belang van staat en onderdaan, werkgewer en werknemer. Die biblioteekgroep neem ook genoëe daarmee dat hy in sy streewe na beter werksomstandighede en moontlikhede tot bevordering gebonde sal wees aan minimum akademiese en professionele vereistes. In hierdie verband is daar egter nog heelwat gebreke wat uit die weg geruim moet word. In kort : 'n vergelyking met ander identiese groepe openbaar nog 'n treffende agterstand, terwyl die vergoeding, veral by die laer groepe, nie die so hoë eise regverdig nie. Ook hierdie ongerymdheid sal mettertyd moet verdwyn. As die blik slegs 'n paar jaar terug gewerp word, is dit duidelik dat daar vir die biblioteekgroep in die Staatsdiens 'n rooskleurige toekoms wag. Elke werker is dit egter in belang van homself, sy professie wat hy beoefen en die land wat hy dien verskuldig om hom nie alleen beter toe te rus nie, maar ook 'n gehalte van werk te lever wat die goeie saak nie skade sal berokken nie. Die tyd is ook nou verby dat elke biblioteekwerker sy departementelege of afdelingsbiblioteek as 'n

<sup>1</sup> Sesde verslag van die Kommissie van Onderzoek na toestande in die staatsdiens, (U. G. 54-48)

<sup>2</sup> Suid-Afrikaanse Biblioteke. Band 15 no. 1, Julie 1947, p. 10. Aspects of Library Work in S. A. Cape Town, Balkema. 1948. pp. 96-108.

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afsonderlike eenheid sal beskou en slegs die belangte daarvan — dikwels ten koste van ander—op die voorgrond stel. Tans behoort ons aan een groot familie en moet geen selfsugtige strewe gedooog word nie. In studie, saamstaan, deeglikheid en getrouheid lê ons krag.

*S. J. Kritzinger.*

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## GRAHAMSTOWN PUBLIC LIBRARY

### *A Correction*

We print the following correction to the article on Grahamstown Public Library that appeared in *South African Libraries* 17(1) 3 July, 1949 :—

1. "*The first available minutes are dated Jan. 1878.*" Minutes for many years before that date are to be found in the *Grahamstown Journal*; it is the original minute books that are lost.

2. "*The annual report of the year 1877 is the 14th, revealing that the first report was in 1864.*" When the name and constitution of the Library was changed in 1863, the numbering of the annual reports began afresh with a no. 1, but the very full previous reports, from no. 1 in 1842 onwards, survive in the *Journal*, together with accounts of general and special meetings.

3. "*For some years it was housed in what had been the Standard Bank.*" It was there for only five years, compared with 21 years and 15 years in its previous homes and 38 afterwards in the City Hall.

4. "*No benefactions have been received.*" William Porter bequeathed £100 in 1880 and Sir Jan Kotze £500 in 1940.

5. "*Barry*" in the list of librarians should read "Barry".

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## 395 and 397

As the similarity between the post office box numbers 395 and 397 in Pretoria has caused some puzzlement, it may perhaps be helpful to distinguish between them in this note :—

*Box 395* is the box number of the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and is, therefore, the correct one for all communications intended for the C.S.I.R. Library and Information Division. As the Head of the Division is Editor of *South African Libraries*, Box 395 is also the correct address for any purely *editorial* correspondence.

*Box 397* is the much more venerable box number of the State Library, including the National Lending Department (i.e. Inter-Library loans). It is also the postal address of the present Headquarters of the South African Library Association. Any *business* correspondence (particularly letters containing postal-orders) connected with *South African Libraries* should be sent to 397.

# OPENINGSREDE VAN DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEEKVERENIGING JAARLIKSE KONFERENSIE

Pretoria 5 tot 9 November 1950

DR A. J. STALS, *Minister van Volksgesondheid* <sup>1</sup>

TOE ek genader was om die openingswoorde by hierdie geleentheid uit te spreek, het ek dit my aangename plig geag om daartoe in te stem in my destydse kapasiteit as Minister van Onderwys. Met die verandering van portefeuiljes moes die taak na regte oorgegaan het op my kollega en vriend, Sy Edele Advokaat C. R. Swart, die eerste minister wat beklee is met die omvangryke naam van Minister van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap. Ek was dus aan die begin ietwat uit die veld geslaan toe my die verskering gegee is dat, nieteenstaande die skuiwing waarna verwys is, nog van my verlang word dat my belofte nie verbreek mag word nie. Nou kan ek dit egter goed verstaan : afgesien van my persoonlike liefde vir studie en lees is ek as Minister van Gesondheid tog immers geregtig om op te tree by die kongres van manne en vroue wat in die professie wat hulle beoefen ontsaglik baie kan bydra tot die geestelike en verstandelike welsyn van die volk. Dis aan u almal bekend dat feitlik alle sonde en ongeluk gebore word in die gedagte-wêreld en dit moet dus u taak wees om die menslike gedagtes gevange te neem vir wat goed, edel en opbouend is. 'n Grootser doelstelling as dit is nouliks denkbaar. Naaste-liefde en -gelukwerp dan ook steeds hoë diwidende af.

Bibliotekwese is een van die oudste professies. Die amp van bibliotekaris het feitlik sy ontstaan gehad by die skepping van die eerste boek. Dat die toe ook met priesterlike of godsdienslike magte beklee was, spreek boekdele. Daarby kon alleen die intelligentste of mees geleerde persoon die amp beoefen, want van hom is nie net verwag om die hand op die boek te lê nie, maar ook die inhoud daarvan aan ander te vertolk. Of dit vandag nog van u verwag word, sal u beter kan oordeel. Persoonlik kan ek kwalik sien hoedat 'n persoon sonder kulturele en akademiese agtergrond 'n suksesvolle bibliotekaris kan wees. Daarom is dit verblydend dat u Vereniging besluit het om in die nabye toekoms slegs aan graduandi die diploma toe te ken. Die hoogste poste in die grotere biblioteke behoort beklee te word deur manne en vroue wat akademies en professioneel goed toegerus is. Terselfdertyd behoort daar seker vir ander wat nog nie ten volle gekwalificeer het nie tog ook die geleentheid te wees om minder verantwoordelike poste te beklee. Maar ook in hulle geval moet dit die strewe wees om verder vorentoe te

<sup>1</sup> Gelees in absentia deur Mn. van der Walt, Sekretaris van Onderwys.

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beur en te kwalifiseer. Die tyd van die onopgeleide werker is verby. Die eise van die lewe het so moeilik geword dat slegs die persoon wat 'n deeglike studie van sy vak gemaak het enige redelike hoop op sukses het. Dit geld vir sowel die akademikus as die ambagsman. Ja, selfs ook die boer kan nie maar boer soos Pa geboer het nie. Veranderde omstandighede vereis gewysigde metodes, ofskoon ek betyds wil waarsku teen die foutiewe veronderstelling dat alle nuwere metodes net verbeterings is. Ook in hierdie geval geld die gulde reël van President Kruger, nl. om te bou op die goeie van die verlede.

Dat die biblioteekprofession in ons land die laaste twintig jaar met reusagtige spronge vorentoe gegaan het, ly geen twyfel nie. Een-en-twintig jaar gelede het ons in menige oopsig nog in die donker eeu gelewe. Individuale bibliotekarisse het op hulle eentjie geswoeg en gesweet, maar dit wou maar nie vorder nie. Toe gebeur dit dat in 1928 twee vooraanstaande oorsese bibliotekarisse, 'n Skot (S. A. Pitt) en 'n Amerikaan (Milton J. Ferguson) ons land besoek onder beskerming van die Carnegie-korporasie—daardie liggaam wat in die verlede so geweldig baie vir biblioteke gedoen het. 'n Konferensie is in Bloemfontein gehou en is bygewoon deur ongeveer 80 bibliotekarisse, regerings- en universiteitsverteenvoordigers en ander belangstellendes. Dit was die prikkel wat nodig was en van toe af was die gort gaar: die S.A. Biblioteekvereniging is in 1930 in die lewe geroep; takke is gestig; konferensies gehou; eksams ingestel; die joernaal, *Suid-Afrikaanse Biblioteke*, het in 1933 die lewenslig aanskou en die stelsel van uitlening tussen biblioteke het 'n werklikheid geword. Dit het geleid tot die opvallende verbetering in die samewerking tussen biblioteke in die algemeen. Die konferensie het hom ook uitgespreek ten gunste van 'n vry bibliekstelsel en hier en daar het 'n aantal openbare biblioteke begin wegdoen met die beperkende jaargelde.

Die stoot wat die konferensie van 1928 gegee het, was egter nie voldoende nie. Dit was nodig dat 'n grondige ondersoek van staatsweë ingestel moes word na die biblioteekstruktur van die land. Dit het in 1936 geskied en die aanbevelings van die Young-verslag word, soos u weet, selfs tot vandag toe nog in werking gestel—weliswaar het die oorlog dit vertraag. Dat die regering nie afsydig staan nie, bewys nie alleen die aanstelling van die Inter-departemente Komitee oor Biblioteke in die Unie van 1936 nie, maar ook die instelling en finansiëring van die vry provinsiale biblioteekdienste en die subsidering van die twee nasionale biblioteke in Kapstad en Pretoria. Daar is nog verder gegaan en 'n paar jaar gelede het die staat besluit om ook sy eie huis in order te kry. Dit het nodig geword dat die veelvuldige departemente biblioteke gekoördineer en langs erkende moderne metodes administreer en beheer moes word. Bibliotekposte in die staatsdiens is spesial gegradeer en aan minimum professionele eise onderhewig gemaak. 'n Hoofbibliotekaris, wat nie aan een besondere bibliotek verbonden is nie, is aangestel om die verskillende dienste te koördineer en, sover moontlik, eenvormige metodes toe te pas. Hy is ook verantwoordelik vir die opbouing van 'n

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gesamentlike katalogus van alle publikasies in die staatsdepartemente. Verder verteenwoordig hy die regering op die Administratiewe Raad van u Vereniging.

'n Ander voorwaartse stap is ongetwyfeld die oorskakeling van biblioteekdienste van die Departement van Binnelandse Sake na die Departement van Onderwys, Kuns en Wetenskap. Dis die Departement waarin alle biblioteeksake huis-hoort, want wie sal dit vandag nog betwyfel dat biblioteke 'n belangrike deel van die onderwys uitmaak? Ek wil voorspel dat biblioteke in die toekoms nog tot 'n baie groter mate ingeskakel sal word in die onderwys en hoe gouer dit besef word hoe meer vrug op die werk daar sal wees. Dit is nodig dat die dienste wat u bied in sy breëre aspekte beskou sal word. Ek kan my voorstel dat daar uitstekende samewerking kan bestaan tussen u en die Afdeling Opvoeding van Volwassenes, omdat daar belangrike punte van gemeenskaplike belang is. Die Komitee wat in 1945 ondersoek ingestel het na die opvoeding van volwassenes in Suid-Afrika verklaar dan ook self dat „'n toereikende en doeltreffende biblioteekdiens is 'n essensiële agtergrond vir enige skema van onderwys vir volwassenes“. Dieselfde Komitee het bevind dat die biblioteke wat toe bestaan het minder as drie persent van die totale blanke bevolking van boeke voorsien waarvan die meeste ontspanningsleesstof bevat het. Sedertdien het die toestand beslis verbeter, veral as gevolg van die kosteloze dienste wat biblioteke in besonder in die Transvaal verskaf. Al sou die persentasie ietwat gestyg het, sal u seker saamstem dat die veld in die ander drie provinsies nog feitlik braak lê. Dis verblydend om te kan weet dat die voorgenome vry biblioteekskema in Kaapland reeds sover gevorder het dat waarskynlik vroeg in 1950 met die bediening van die eerste streek begin sal word. Ook die Oranje-Vrystaat is vinning op pad in die rigting en dit kan aangeneem word dat Natal nie veel langer afsydig sal kan staan nie.

By die „vrywording“ van biblioteke en die instelling van die kosteloze plattelandse biblioteekdienste behoort u mettertyd toe te sien dat die literatuur wat verskaf word sover moontlik van 'n goeie gehalte is. Vir leesstof van 'n skadelike en afbrekende aard moet daar in ons samelewning geen sprake wees nie. Ek het aan die begin daarop gesinspeel dat 'n gedagtewêreld wat rein en onbesoedeld is tot 'n groot mate daartoe bydra dat die liggaam en die gemoed gesond en werk-lustig bly. Daar het in die laaste tyd ernstige stemme opgegaan teen die toelaatbaarheid van skadelike leesstof in ons samelewning en hierdie roepstemme, wat dit wel meen met ons volk, kan nie altyd in die wind geslaan word nie. Waarom moet dit toegelaat word dat lelike en vuil literatuur sal afbreek wat met soveel sorg en voorbidding opgebou is in die huisgesin, die kerk en die skool? Bibliotekarisse kan daartoe mee help dat 'n gesonde openbare mening in die verband opgebou word, sodat geen skrywer in ons land dit sal waag om afbrekende boeke te skryf of uitgewers om pornografiese leesstof die lig te laat sien nie. Dit moet ons almal se trots wees om in hierdie verband saam te werk.

Ek merk op dat u agenda in meer as een oopsig swaar gelaai is en dat die

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konstitusie ook in hersiening geneem gaan word, o.a. wat betref die verhouding van u Vereniging teenoor die nie-blankes. U sal wel weet wat die beste is om te doen en hoe u te werk moet gaan om die so nodige samewerking tussen die twee blanke bevolkingsgroepe te behou. Mag daar dan ook niks gebeur wat hierdie eenheid van optrede in gevaar stel nie. Aan die ander kant sou dit ook verkeerd wees as u by die stigting van 'n afsonderlike biblioteekvereniging vir nie-blankes u hande in onskuld was en op hierdie stadium hulle heeltemal aan hul eie lot oorlaat. Die Voorsienigheid het dit in sy diepste wysheid so gewil dat die blankes die lig van die evangelie en die beskawing hier aan die suidpunt van Afrika moes kom aansteek en brandende hou. Assulks het ons dan terdeë ook 'n verantwoordelikheid teenoor die nie-blankes en as voogde betaam dit ons om hulle by te staan, sodat ook *hulle* op die goeie van *hulle* verlede kan bou en 'n beter toekoms help skep. U Vereniging, of lede van u Vereniging, sou dus kon voortgaan om by wyse van belangstelling en advies hulp te bied totdat die nie-blanke lede van u professie in staat is om op eie bene te staan en hul eie vereniging self te administreer en te beheer.

*Die Biblioteek*—volgens ons opvatting die plek waar 'n versameling van boeke versorg word tot voordeel van dié wat daar van die kennis wil gebruik maak. Watter moontlikhede bestaan hierin? Wie weet hoeveel kennis in die ou biblioteek van Alexandria vergader was—en vir die mensdom verlore is? Alle biblioteke is nie wetenskaplike instellings nie. Hulle aantreklikheid, hulle inspirasie, hulle waardes, moet grotendeels afhang van die tydges—maar meer bepaald van die Bestuur, Organisasie en Bibliotekaris. Natuurlik sou ek verkeerd handel as ek nie ook die middele beskikbaar as faktor stel nie.

As liefhebber van boeke, as die beste mensevriende, het ek kennis met etlike tipes gemaak. Die biblioteek van die Universiteit van Stellenbosch was destyds nog in die kruipstadium; die biblioteek van die Universiteit van Dublin was 'n heiligdom—waar alleen met eerbied ingetree is, en met fluisterstemme menings aangedui was. Bevoorreg onder die universiteite van die wêreld, was dit met twee ander saam geregtig op elke publikasie in die Britse Ryk. Sy eeue-oue stukke! Die versierings met borsbeeld van dié wat vooruitgegaan het, maar wat onsterflik sal bly! Watter vormende mag het dit deur sy honderde van jare se bestaan gehad? Wie kan dit beeld?

Ek denk ook aan die bekoring van die Parlementsbiblioteek. Dit was natuurlik toe 'n ander mens; nie meer die Soekende Gees—die Wistik van Frederik van Eeden nie. Hier was iemand wat sy weg reeds bepaal het maar wat kennis en voorligting nodig gehad het vir eie bevrediging, en skraging vir sy werk. Hierdie selftekening is nog geldig vir all klasse van lesers. Ons meld nou nie dié wat dit vir tydverkorting doen nie.

In later jare moes ek met andere, en kleinere, kennis maak. Versamelings van boeke, heeltemal doelloos, en waardeloos vir die omgewing; in werklikheid

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berekend om die leeslus by die jong mens vir goed dood te maak. Dit in omgewings waar dit allernoodsaaklik was dat daar goeie biblioteke moet wees weens die bedruk-kende omstandighede van die omgewing. Heel onlangs in 'n klein gemeenskap van plusminus 500 mense, tref ek 'n redelike aantal boeke aan, dog liederlik, onaantreklik. Daar het ek geen nie-Engelse boek gesien nie. In die gemeenskap het ek geen nie-Afrikaanse woord gehoor nie. Wat sou die doel van hierdie versameling van boeke wees? Een van die eerste boeke wat my hier getref het, was "The Devil's Playground". Wat moet dit voorstel?

Mnr. die Voorsitter : Elke een, byna elke geslag, het sy slagspreuke. Vandaag is dit : *Vry skool ; vry gesondheid ; vry maaltye ; vrye tyd ; vry stakings ; vry biblioteke.* Ek verwag nog „vry brood en spele“. Ek tree nie as kritikus op nie! Vrye denke is nog altyd 'n menslike reg. Al wat ek wil opmerk, is dat dit vir my vry vreemd voorkom. Ek het in my lewe nog nie kennis gemaak met enige vry verbruiks-goedere nie, behalwe die lug, en dit ook nie altoos nie. Wat ek vry te gebruik gehad het, moes ander voor betaal.

Sonder om nou aanmatigend voor te kom, om vir u beleidsrigtings aan te dui, wil ek tog net 'n gemeenplaas uit : Érens moet daar kompensasie wees, tensy ons klaarmaak om vry gou dood te gaan. Dié kompensasie kom my hierin voor—naamlik as ons die nodige stappe neem om te verseker dat :

- (a) die blanke hierdeur aangemoedig en geesterk word om sy leierskap te be-stendig, om sy boodskap van beskawing aan Suidelike Afrika waardig te dra ;
- (b) die nie-blanke rasse daardie hulp en leiding van die blankes verkry wat hulle in staat sal stel om hulle roeping te vervul ;
- (c) die ontwikkeling van beide kleurgroepe so beïnvloed mag word dat die vryheid van gees al die ander vryhede sal oorskadu en die dieper vrede vir almal 'n erfenis sal wees.

Die veredelde mens, soos hy behoort te wees, deur die regte gebruik te maak van die regte boeke, voel saam met Horatius : "*Non omnis moriar, magna pars mea vitabit libitinam*". As die biblioteek hierdie skakel is en u vereniging die middel, dan skep ons 'n nuwe skakel tussen tyd en ewigheid.

Terwyl ek u dan gelukgewens het met die besonder opvallende vordering wat u die afgelope jare gemaak het, sal u my wel die paar opmerkings wat ek uitgespreek het verskoon. Dis met die suiwerste oogmerke gedoen en met die bewustheid dat daar in elke beroep groei en aanpassing by nuwere omstandighede moet wees. Wat die beroep self betref, moet daar steeds die verlange wees na beter en hoër diens vir die medemens. Die res sal byna vanself volg.

Meneer die President, ek wil u persoonlik felisiteer met wat u reeds bereik het in die skepping van gratis bibliotekdienste in dorpe en die platteland van Transvaal. Mag u wysheid van Omhoog ontvang om die vergadering reg voor te gaan. Ek wil die hoop uitspreek dat daar nie alleen sukses op u besluite sal rus nie, maar dat u as kongresgangers tussen-in ook nog voldoende sal kan geniet van die skoonheid om u.

## LIBRARIES AND IGNORANCE

*Presidential Address<sup>1</sup>*

E. A. BORLAND

ANY LIBRARIAN of a public library in South Africa, who really comes into contact with the public and not merely sits in his office, cannot fail to be struck by the fact that the public as a whole is regrettably ignorant.

Well-organized schools, colleges, universities, are to be found on every hand, but when a member of the public steps into a library and expresses his desire to become a member, the librarian can often see that the person is not only unused to the atmosphere of a public library but unused to contact with books. The librarian cannot, of course, characterize all persons as being ignorant : thousands are much better read and knowledgeable than he is. Neither is he entitled to condemn the public for being as ignorant as it is. Let him rather perform the function of educator. After all, the library claims to be an educational institution. The librarian should act as a dispeller of ignorance to the best of his ability and to the limit of the book resources of the country.

Literacy statistics obtained by the Department of Census indicated that one fourth of the Europeans in the Union could neither read nor write in 1911 ; and of the Non-Europeans about nine-tenths could neither read nor write at that date. I have tried, unsuccessfully, to procure from the Union Department of Census and Statistics more up-to-date figures regarding illiteracy within the Union.

In 1926 the Department of Census decided that all Europeans could read and write ; and statements regarding literacy have since then not been asked of Europeans on the Census forms. At the last Census, in 1946, non-Europeans were questioned with regard to literacy, but in answer to my enquiry the Census Office states that replies have not yet been tabulated fully, and are not yet available for publication. As the Census definition of literacy is based upon a mere ability to read and write, the absence of figures is perhaps not a very serious loss.<sup>2</sup>

After my failure with literacy figures I turned to figures relating to school attendance, on the assumption that any person who has been to school, even let us say up to standards two or three, should be able to read and write in one or other language and would therefore be a user of books, in varying degrees of complexity. In Appendix B I have shown figures obtained from the Department of Census indicating the number of children attending school in the Union between 1910 and 1946. In 1946 about one million three hundred thousand children

<sup>1</sup> Read at the South African Library Association's Annual Conference in Pretoria, 1949.

<sup>2</sup> For 1911 figures see Appendix A.

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attended school ; about 417,000 were Europeans ; 225,000 were Coloured and Asiatics ; and 648,000 were Natives. Between 1936 and 1946 the number of non-Europeans attending school almost doubled itself. European attendance increased by about 10 per cent of the 1936 total during the period. For comparative purposes I have shown a general summary of population figures in Appendix C. In Appendix D the percentage of children attending schools is shown. These figures show that approximately 10 per cent of the European children of this country have attended school in each year since 1918. Assuming one fifth of the population to be children of school-going age, it will readily be seen that since 1918 practically all of the European children in the Union have had the opportunity of going to school. The 1946 figures for Asiatics and Coloured children indicate that they too, of recent years, have been provided with the same opportunity and have made use of it. The Bantu are still very much too below standard, whether due to lack of opportunity or otherwise is for the experts in education to say.

Lack of schooling opportunity cannot be blamed, in the cases of the Europeans and Coloured persons, for the general ignorance that the librarian finds so rampant. We must look elsewhere for the cause.

Some educationists point to the examination fetish as being a major cause. Others say that, if children and university students are to obtain jobs, and make their way in the world, they must be coached for those examinations which are most acceptable to the employers of labour. Unfortunately, in the process, very little time is left for the pursuit of arts, crafts, hobbies, and other leisure-time occupations that go to make life interesting, e.g. reading and writing. School library work, if it exists at all, is still in its infancy in South Africa. Many teachers cannot yet see the value of reading generally and its effect upon the child's mental ability. Most of the text books in education written in South Africa ignore the library as a means of education. The child's experience and knowledge is still limited, as a rule, to the things that have been told to him in the classroom, and picked up in conversation with the neighbours. It is evident that the child's knowledge is, therefore, not very wide ; and when the child leaves, having passed his examinations, he believes, in his ignorance, that he knows as much as it is necessary to know. The child or adult who has had contact with books at home, at school and in the public library is indeed fortunate, for access to books can provide a cure for general ignorance.

The librarian says—let people read, provide books on all subjects. Get people into the habit of turning to the library whenever they want information instead of trying to suck knowledge out of their thumbs, as they do now. Let there be "information bureaux", if you do not like the term "reference libraries", all over the country, where information may be dispensed to users when they want it. These libraries should serve the general public, the schoolmasters, and pupils alike,

I believe that the matter is serious enough to have employed in every town

## SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEKE

and village at least one trained "information librarian". I think that an information service is as necessary to any community as is the ordinary primary school. Remember that there is one school teacher employed to approximately every forty pupils. Surely there should be at least one trained, and decently paid, librarian to every 1,000 Europeans in this country. It is about time we took the job of dispelling ignorance seriously. Up till now we have merely been touching the fringe of the subject.

I am aware that this service will cost much more money than is now being spent by municipalities, Government and Provinces upon library service, but in the long run it would be more economical, from a national point of view, to employ these trained librarians, reader's advisers or information officers—whatever you may choose to call them—in every town and village of the country, rather than continue to suffer as the country does, the present wastage of effort through ignorance. Librarians could then perhaps assist the public to make better use of the knowledge that is to be found in books, and also to correlate the efforts of the multitudinous agencies trying ineffectually at present to furnish information for the betterment of the country. The public of South Africa does not make use of the informational and cultural services our government and other agencies now provide, because there is little co-ordination of effort. The departments of agriculture, public health, education, social welfare, are all equipped to provide specialized information for those who require it. It is not lack of interest, but ignorance of the existence of these services that prevents the public from using them efficiently.

Looking around us we find all sorts of informational agencies claiming the attention of the public but not being really effective. The air is full of undirected propaganda, e.g. soil conservation and anti-erosion propaganda reaches the newspaper reader mainly in the towns, but the farmer still continues to burn his veld.

The focal point of all cultural endeavour in the town, village or rural community should be the local library ; but at present there is no local library of any significance in many South African towns and villages. In the British Isles and North America, librarians are proud to be able to serve their public with information on all topics available on record—not only through the printed work, but also with audio-visual material. In our country, librarians are apparently afraid to provide gramophone records, documentary films and microfilms for the public; or to sponsor lectures for readers, play-acting and play-reading ; story-hours for children (which would be useful especially among the Bantu, I believe). These things, if touched upon at all, are left to Government agencies such as the Film Bureau, or Adult Education Section of the Department of Education, Arts and Sciences ; or the endeavours of a few isolated enthusiasts.

It is about time, I think, that the librarian exerted himself a bit more in making our national information and cultural services available to the public.

## LIBRARIES AND IGNORANCE

After many long years we have sufficiently advanced to have widespread, if not completely effective, library facilities for all of the Europeans living in the Transvaal. The Orange Free State is not far behind. Now that the Cape has surmounted its legal difficulties, I expect that we shall see great progress being made in the rural library situation in that Province within the near future. Southern Rhodesia and Natal too, we are pleased to learn, are also taking a lively interest in the development of rural libraries.

With the development of the Provincial library services in all four Provinces of the Union, a golden opportunity is presenting itself. To have a well-organized information service, should be one of the fundamental aims of any Provincial Library Service, with its ramifications stretching out into all parts of the country. Municipalities also should recognize the part they can play in directing and financing such services. Of the amenities usually provided by a municipality—fire brigades, parks, bowling greens, traffic control, tarred streets, town halls, etc., the public library has the biggest following. In some Transvaal towns about 70 per cent to 75 per cent of the European population are regular library users to-day.

The municipality, no matter how small it is, should at the very least provide quarters for a public library and pay the salary of a trained librarian. I repeat, even the smallest municipality should pay a trained librarian who should be regarded as equal to the Town Clerk or the school master in essentiality.

Do not suppose that it is only the library profession that is keen upon developing our services. All over the country we hear of organizations, women's associations especially, clamouring for better library services. I am told that much impetus to the rural library movement in Natal is being provided by the Natal Federation of Women's Institutes. It is worth noting that the Women's Section of the Transvaal Agricultural Union has not been slow to recognize the value of libraries in the country areas. They have made it their business to sponsor rural libraries on every possible occasion. It is now a commonplace to find a library item on the agenda paper of every Annual Congress of the Women's Agricultural Union, coupled with one or other resolution calling upon the Government, or the Provincial Administration, to improve library services. Incidentally, at their last Conference, they requested the Provincial Administration to provide the Transvaal Provincial Library with six more Travelling Libraries. They also asked the library organization to provide sets of plays that could be used by play-reading and play-acting groups in the remote parts of the province. On this occasion, the Honourable the Minister of Agriculture, Mr S. P. Le Roux, addressed the ladies on the importance of developing a better and more interesting type of homelife in the rural areas, chiefly with the object of helping to stem the flow of dissatisfied or adventure-seeking youth to the urban areas. He did not mention specifically how this should be done, but it is obvious that the introduction of books and information into homes and communities would help to develop the mind of the

## SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES

individual and to induce him to find that greater interest in his existing environment, which would perhaps distract him from the siren-like lure of the cities. The influence of books is in direct proportion to their availability. They must be physically close at hand in sufficient numbers for the reader to make a selection of what he needs. They must cover the subjects that will be of interest to the readers ; and above all they must be intelligible to their readers, i.e. they must be provided in languages that the readers can understand readily. This last point is of extreme importance to those who wish to improve the cultural welfare of this country.

Those of us who were born and grown up in this country, take a great pride not only in the quantity of literature published in Afrikaans but the grand quality of many of its authors. Imagine the village library in the Transvaal or Orange Free State, and many parts of the Cape too, of thirty or forty years ago. Afrikaans was the predominantly spoken language, but books were to be had only in English, Nederlands, or other European languages. Library committees bought books in English because they were readily available in that language ; they also took care to procure books in Nederlands. Unfortunately there were few people in the small towns and villages who read English or Nederlands with pleasure ; the result was that the small subscription libraries generally catered for the English-speaking people only. The general impression generally created, therefore, was that the Afrikaans-speaking people were more greatly interested in "outdoor things", as it was put, than in indoor occupations such as reading. Even eminent politicians of Afrikaans descent accepted this view without question. The truth of the matter was that there were only a handful of books available to be read in Afrikaans, and these were read to tatters.

I recently asked the South African Society of Publishers for statistics showing the number of books and pamphlets published in Afrikaans over the years, but unfortunately these figures have not been kept. The State Library has provided me with figures showing the number of books and pamphlets received in terms of the Copyright Act of 1916, during the years 1936 to 1948 (Appendix E). They indicate that about 48 books and pamphlets written in the Afrikaans language now leave the presses every month. These books and pamphlets cover all classes, of course, and include many publications, such as arithmetic books, used only in schools. The number of these books is small, however. There is just one criticism that one must make, now that the publishers have found out that Afrikaners will read if they are given something to read in their own language, and that is the acceptance and publication of a few very poorly written manuscripts. The number of writers in Afrikaans is increasing day by day and one may safely expect that with a greater quantity of manuscripts offered for publication, greater competition between writers will cause the worst to be eliminated. (The same criticism is also applicable to South African publications in the English language—some of them

## LIBRARIES AND IGNORANCE

are real abominations that should never have seen the light of day). But it is the achievement of the authors of Afrikaans books, and their publishers, who had the courage to take the risk of selling relatively small editions when the market was uncertain, that I would like to praise. Many remarkable novels, poems and non-fiction works have been produced in Afrikaans during the last twenty years or so, and they have certainly helped to make the librarian's task of bringing books to the people an easier one.

The librarian has merely to look at *Nienaber's Bibliografie*,<sup>1</sup> to get some idea of the number of books published in Afrikaans in various subjects over the years since 1861, when the *Zamenspraak tusschen Klass Waarzegger en Jan Twyfelaar* was written by L. H. Meurant.

The field covered by Afrikaans authors is no longer confined to poems, novels, dramas, religion, and the history of South Africa ; but many works on useful arts, as well as the sciences, now appear. Some excellent art publications have been published during the last few years. Sociological works frequently appear.

With the assistance of these books the librarian is now able to offer Afrikaans-speaking readers enough books of good quality to last them a lifetime. The result is clearly evident. Afrikaans-speaking people, children especially, are reading avidly.

It is interesting to note that, whereas in the Transvaal rural areas, and small towns and villages, only about 250,000 books a year were read six years ago, the public is now reading about 1,800,000 books a year, most of which are in the Afrikaans language.

Many readers are becoming very stern critics of the books librarians and booksellers place before them, and it is obvious that books covering many more subjects are required.

I would like to suggest that the Adult Education Section of the Union Department of Education, Arts and Sciences, offer subsidies to publishers of popularly written informational books of good quality in Afrikaans. For this purpose one would have to avoid the dry-as-dust doctoral thesis type of publication, dedicated to the author's mother or sister, which would be read by one person only, i.e. the professor who has to read the thesis because he is paid to do so. I mention this because many pamphlets now published by the Department of Agriculture and other Departments have very little popular appeal ; some are quite unintelligible in Afrikaans or English. They may be perfectly good records of scientific experiments, but they do not convey to the reader the basic facts and conclusions of the author in clear and simple language. The European public requires books it can understand in Afrikaans and English. (One may also add that the same type

<sup>1</sup> Nienaber, P. J. *Bibliografie van Afrikaans boeke* (6 April 1861–6 April 1943) Publicite Handels reklamediens Johannesburg, 1943. Deel 2 (April 1943–Oktober, 1948), Published by the author, Johannesburg, 1948.

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of argument applies to the provision in Bantu languages of reliable information, presented clearly for the use of Non-European readers.)

I would like to repeat that, in my opinion, the public is generally ignorant, but that with the use of books, lectures, organized readings, and audio-visual material, fruitful and inspiring knowledge can be brought to the notice of readers by librarians. Our library services should not only be widespread enough to enable all persons to make use of books, but intensive enough to improve the general standard of knowledge in every community. Any village that can boast of a school or a church should also possess a well-stocked information library, under the charge of a properly paid librarian, whose main duty it would be to see that the public make good use of the information that lies at their disposal ; and to act as the co-ordinator and encouraging agent of all cultural endeavour within the locality.

The small town librarian especially trained for the job, can play a very important part in the intellectual development of our people, and the local library should be recognized by the authorities as the centre of culture in any town or village. The small town and village libraries have great potentialities, slumbering or latent at present ; they should be aroused and put to work.

### APPENDIX A LITERACY IN UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA<sup>1</sup>

7 May 1911

#### Union of South Africa all Races

|                         | <i>Persons</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------|
| <i>Read &amp; write</i> | 1,383,599      | 744,717     | 638,882       |
| <i>Read only</i>        | 83,947         | 43,443      | 40,504        |
| <i>Neither</i>          | 4,500,083      | 2,277,776   | 2,222,307     |
| <i>Unspecified</i>      | 5,765          | 3,456       | 2,309         |

#### Europeans

|                         |         |         |         |
|-------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| <i>Read &amp; write</i> | 969,089 | 526,458 | 442,631 |
| <i>Read only</i>        | 17,498  | 9,231   | 8,267   |
| <i>Neither</i>          | 287,783 | 148,456 | 139,327 |
| <i>Unspecified</i>      | 1,872   | 1,019   | 863     |

#### Other (Non-Europeans)

|                         |            |           |           |
|-------------------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| <i>Read &amp; write</i> | 414,510    | 218,259   | 196,251   |
| <i>Read only</i>        | 66,449     | 34,212    | 32,237    |
| <i>Neither</i>          | 41,212,300 | 2,129,320 | 2,082,980 |
| <i>Unspecified</i>      | 3,893      | 2,437     | 1,456     |

<sup>1</sup> Union of South Africa. Census 1911. Annexure to General Report. Part 3, U.G. 32 B 1912, 1912, p. 241.

## LIBRARIES AND IGNORANCE

### APPENDIX B

#### NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOLS IN UNION OF S.A.

##### Non Europeans

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Europeans</i> | <i>Coloured &amp; Asiatic</i> | <i>Native</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|-------------|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| 1910        | 163,257          | 136,000                       |               | 299,257      |
| 1911        | 177,663          | 147,109                       |               | 324,772      |
| 1912        | 189,425          | 159,215                       |               | 348,640      |
| 1913        | 203,421          | 167,708                       |               | 371,129      |
| 1914        | 201,725          | 179,124                       |               | 380,849      |
| 1915        | 229,667          | 182,841                       |               | 412,508      |
| 1916        | 247,294          | 192,055                       |               | 439,349      |
| 1917        | 259,076          | 201,419                       |               | 460,495      |
| 1918        | 283,149          | 220,104                       |               | 503,253      |
| 1919        | 292,628          | 221,783                       |               | 514,411      |
| 1920        | 303,255          | 238,137                       |               | 541,392      |
| 1921        | 322,635          | 245,946                       |               | 568,581      |
| 1922        | 331,081          | 251,872                       |               | 582,953      |
| 1923        | 332,066          | 263,738                       |               | 595,804      |
| 1924        | 330,371          | 262,763                       |               | 593,134      |
| 1925        | 329,834          | 276,926                       |               | 606,760      |
| 1926        | 330,762          | 289,545                       |               | 620,307      |
| 1927        | 336,459          | 304,617                       |               | 641,076      |
| 1928        | 342,033          | 324,706                       |               | 666,739      |
| 1929        | 347,989          | 361,553                       |               | 709,542      |
| 1930        | 353,942          | 382,707                       |               | 736,649      |
| 1931        | 358,021          | 398,413                       |               | 756,434      |
| 1932        | 360,126          | 403,301                       |               | 763,427      |
| 1933        | 361,665          | 114,500                       | 314,814       | 790,979      |
| 1934        | 364,641          | 122,025                       | 324,649       | 811,315      |
| 1935        | 371,952          | 130,408                       | 351,908       | 854,268      |
| 1936        | 375,157          | 140,606                       | 359,524       | 875,287      |
| 1937        | 381,550          | 149,591                       | 396,634       | 927,775      |
| 1938        | 386,880          | 158,436                       | 430,872       | 976,188      |
| 1939        | 391,056          | 165,847                       | 454,537       | 1,011,440    |
| 1940        | 394,180          | 175,474                       | 473,634       | 1,043,288    |
| 1941        | 388,925          | 180,359                       | 497,802       | 1,067,086    |
| 1942        | 393,657          | 186,235                       | 515,819       | 1,095,711    |
| 1943        | 399,024          | 192,109                       | 539,439       | 1,130,572    |
| 1944        | 404,376          | 201,731                       | 567,679       | 1,173,786    |
| 1945        | 410,592          | 214,252                       | 605,924       | 1,230,768    |
| 1946        | 416,902          | 224,801                       | 648,431       | 1,290,134    |

## SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES

### APPENDIX C

#### UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA GENERAL SUMMARY, CENSUS 1911 TO 1946 POPULATION

| Year              | Europeans        |             |               | Non-Europeans |              |                |                 | <i>Total</i> |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|
|                   | <i>All Races</i> | <i>Male</i> | <i>Female</i> | <i>Total</i>  | <i>Bantu</i> | <i>Asiatic</i> | <i>Coloured</i> |              |
| 1911              | 5,973,394        | 685,164     | 591,078       | 1,276,242     | 4,019,006    | 152,203        | 525,943         | 4,697,152    |
| 1921              | 6,928,580        | 782,035     | 737,453       | 1,591,488     | 4,697,813    | 165,731        | 545,548         | 5,409,092    |
| 1926              | —                | 857,393     | 819,929       | 1,677,322     | —            | —              | —               | —            |
| 1931              | —                | 930,541     | 897,634       | 1,828,175     | —            | —              | —               | —            |
| 1936              | 9,589,898        | 1,017,874   | 985,983       | 2,003,857     | 6,596,689    | 219,691        | 769,661         | 7,586,041    |
| 1941              | —                | 1,109,291   | 1,082,890     | 2,192,181     | —            | —              | —               | —            |
| 1946 <sup>1</sup> | 11,258,858       | 1,174,642   | 1,160,818     | 2,335,460     | 7,735,809    | 282,539        | 905,050         | 8,923,391    |

### APPENDIX D

#### UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

##### **Europeans**

Table showing number and percentage of children attending school,

**1911-1946**

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Total Population</i> | <i>Children at School</i> | <i>Percentage of Population</i> |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1911        | 1,276,242               | 177,663                   | 13.9%                           |
| 1918        | 1,421,781               | 283,149                   | 19.9%                           |
| 1921        | 1,591,488               | 322,635                   | 20.2%                           |
| 1926        | 1,677,322               | 330,762                   | 19.7%                           |
| 1931        | 1,828,175               | 358,021                   | 19.5%                           |
| 1936        | 2,033,857               | 375,157                   | 18.4%                           |
| 1941        | 2,192,181               | 388,925                   | 17.7%                           |
| 1946        | 2,335,460               | 416,902                   | 18.6%                           |

##### **Non-Europeans**

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Total Population</i> | <i>Children at School</i> | <i>Percentage of Population</i> |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1911        | 4,697,152               | 147,109                   | 3.1%                            |
| 1921        | 5,409,092               | 245,946                   | 4.5%                            |
| 1936        | 7,586,041               | 875,287                   | 11.5%                           |
| 1946        | 8,923,398               | 1,290,134                 | 14.4%                           |

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary figures.

## LIBRARIES AND IGNORANCE

### Bantu

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Total Population</i> | <i>Children at School</i> | <i>Percentage of Population</i> |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1936        | 6,596,689               | 359,524                   | 5.4%                            |
| 1946        | 7,735,809               | 648,431                   | 8.4%                            |

### Coloured and Asiatic

| <i>Year</i> | <i>Total Population</i> | <i>Children at School</i> | <i>Percentage of Population</i> |
|-------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1936        | 989,352                 | 140,606                   | 14.2%                           |
| 1946        | 1,187,589               | 224,801                   | 18.9%                           |

### APPENDIX E

### THE STATE LIBRARY

#### No. of Publications Received in Terms of Copyright Act of 1916

##### 1936-1948

|           |       |               |
|-----------|-------|---------------|
| 1936..... | 888   | (All classes) |
| 1937..... | 905   | "             |
| 1938..... | 1,044 | "             |
| 1939..... | 1,100 | "             |
| 1940..... | 978   | "             |
| 1941..... | 859   | "             |
| 1942..... | 821   | "             |
| 1943..... | 780   | "             |
| 1944..... | 1,068 | "             |

|         | <i>In English</i> | <i>In Afrikaans</i> | <i>In Bantu</i> | <i>Union<br/>Government Populations</i> | <i>Other Languages</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|---------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|---|------------------------|--------------|
| 1945    | 515               | 452                 | 67              | 139                                     |                        | 1,173        |
| 1946    | 643               | 525                 | 53              | 226                                     | 4                      | 1,451        |
| 1947    | 771               | 577                 | 24              | 339                                     | 4                      | 1,715        |
| 1948    | 669               | 574                 | 26              | 399                                     | 1                      | 1,669        |
| 1945-48 | 2,598             | 2,128               | 170             | 1,103                                   | 9                      | 6,008        |

## TRAVELLING LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION

G. WALLIS<sup>1</sup>

SINCE it is possible to purchase a packet of cigarettes in most towns in this country at some fixed price, and since milk can be delivered to the suburbs as well as the centre of a town with no increase in cost to the consumer, we are apt to lose sight of the costs entailed in the transport and distribution of these, as well as other commodities which are similarly treated. The fixing of the price of commodities, irrespective of the distance from the source of supply or origin, tends to obscure the fact that these costs exist at all and I wonder whether the suburban or country reader, while he smokes his cigarette, sips his tea, and reads the book of his choice, (without the necessity of buying it) realizes that before he was able to enjoy the last of these pleasures, another problem in transport and distribution of goods had to be solved economically—that is the idea of a Travelling Library had to be born and a suitable vehicle built for this purpose.

The success with which this method of distribution has met, is evident from the variety of types which have been evolved and the extent to which they have been used.

I feel sure, however, that there must be a limit to which these Travelling Libraries, (or to use the compact American word "Bookmobiles") can be used economically and this limit Library Authorities and Organizers can determine from their operating and administrative costs as well as their knowledge of the readable "life" of a book, concentration of readers and other factors, quite apart from the limits imposed by Ordinance or Regulation in regard to wheel loads, widths and lengths of the vehicle.

### DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS BY TRAVELLING LIBRARIES (OR BOOKMOBILES)

Broadly speaking, one can divide the distribution of books by Travelling Libraries into two groups :

#### 1. Local or Municipal Distribution

In a distribution of this sort the vehicle, of whatever type it may be, has to operate over short distances only on good roads and with long stopping periods and has to carry only a one-day load and to return frequently to the central Library for replenishment and refuelling.

#### 2. Regional or Rural Distribution

It is in this sort of distribution that, I think, one meets with many more difficulties in the construction of Travelling Libraries, than in the former cases.

Depending on the area and type of country to be served, distances to be

<sup>1</sup> Read at the South African Library Association's Annual Conference in Durban, 1948.

## TRAVELLING LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION

travelled, inferior road conditions and numbers of "reader-groups" to be visited as well as the desirable frequency of such visits, one has a choice of :

(a) Direct distribution by Travelling Library (of whatever type it may be), from Central Library to reader, or

(b) Distribution by Articulated vehicles or Coupled Units in which the front (power unit) part is separable from the rear (or trailer, or semi-trailer) part. In such distribution the whole unit can move to a "forward-base" from which the front part can proceed alone to its reader groups, returning from time to time to replenish from the rear part at the forward base ; the whole unit returning to base periodically for exchange of stocks, or

(c) Distribution in stages, in which a large capacity vehicle operates between the central Library and the "forward-base" and smaller ones which operate only from the "forward-base" to the "reader groups".

On the whole, in this country, Direct Distribution (a) alone has found favour, though, I consider, these are strong chains for Distribution by Articulated Vehicles or Coupled Units operating as indicated in (b). I do not think a Distribution in stages (c) can be seriously considered. The contact between Field Librarians and the Central Library is lost and the mechanical maintenance of the vehicles is liable to suffer.

## TYPES AND SIZES OF TRAVELLING LIBRARIES

Clearly the choice of the most efficient type and size of Travelling Library is one that will be influenced by the kind of distribution envisaged as well as such factors as :

- (a) The area to be covered
- (b) The type of country traversed
- (c) The condition of visiting points, (or reader-groups).

Due to your President, four types of Travelling Libraries have been considered by the Transvaal Administration, namely :

1. A single chassis unit
2. An articulated vehicle, consisting of a load-carrying semi-trailer coupled to a power house (or tractive unit) which carries no independent load
3. An articulated vehicle consisting of a semi-trailer and a front tractive unit, both of which are load-carrying
4. A unit consisting of a small load carrying power unit coupled to a load carrying trailer.

While it is true that only the first of these has actually been produced, we have hopes that the second may soon reach the production stage.

The first type has shown itself to be a very good all-purpose vehicle, capable

## SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEKE

of carrying moderate loads up to (2,5000 to 3,000 lb. of books). Fitted with auxiliary fuel tanks it is capable of long distance work.

While it is not too unwieldy to handle on moderately good roads, it becomes unwieldy to handle on very inferior roads with sharp curves and in cases of engine trouble or overhaul the whole vehicle is put out of service.

The second type, recently considered by the Transvaal Provincial Administration, was proposed in order to overcome the difficulties experienced in type 1, coupled with a desire to increase the load carrying capacity. It is liable, however, to prove more expensive, in so far as first cost is concerned, than type 1.

When types 3 and 4 were discussed with the manufacturers of motor bodies and trailers, both types showed weaknesses it would be difficult to overcome before a suitable design could be evolved.

### CONSTRUCTION AND CONSTRUCTIONAL DETAILS OF TRAVELLING LIBRARIES

Almost entirely independent of the type or capacity of a Travelling Library (but not wholly so), there are a number of factors which influence its construction and to which due consideration must be given in its design.

Here is a list of a number of them together with the way they have been dealt with by the Transvaal Provincial Administration in the construction of its libraries :

1. The vehicle is travelling under full-load conditions all of the time, so that adequate chassis strength must be ensured and tyres must not be overloaded.

2. Protection of books from damage, moisture, and dust, especially when travelling. All doors and opening flaps are sealed with sponge rubber. Bookshelves are designed to slope downwards from the front and are covered with felt and the length of each shelf is kept reasonably short. While travelling, a window or ventilation provides an internal air pressure thus preventing a vacuum forming and the ingress of dust.

3 Vehicles must be arranged speedily "for service" or "for travel". Doors and openings are fitted with the minimum number of fastenings consistent with tightness—it is also desired to arrange that one common key fits all locks. In addition, side flaps have "over-centre" braces which come into operation as they are opened.

4. The accessibility of all books and the visibility of all book titles together with the provision of adequate interior lighting. The book-shelves are kept as reasonably low as could be arranged without endangering the road clearance and a space has been left at the top of these bookshelves to provide light without seriously affecting the carrying capacity.

5. The influence of climate on the design. In overseas countries where wet weather conditions are met with more frequently than in South Africa, the designs

## TRAVELLING LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION

of Travelling Libraries are of the interior type—with either an end entrance or a side entrance, but the sunny conditions of South Africa have made it possible to depart radically from this design and by the use of side-flaps and end door, a revised design has been produced in which the whole of the "wall space" inside and out can be utilized.

Although such an arrangement is, evidently, highly desirable from the point of view of the Librarian, it is very distressing to the designer. The load-distribution is just about the worst he could be given to deal with whatever chassis he chooses, and the "high-up" loading, particularly at the rear of the vehicle produces sway-stresses which are accentuated greatly by the unbraced rear end.

The effects of this type of design together with its load-distribution have been noticeable in the vehicles which have been built for the Transvaal Provincial Administration, and reinforcing had to be resorted to, in an endeavour to lessen these effects.

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## A NEW INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY REVIEW

The publication of a new quarterly International Library Review with the title of LIBRI has been announced from the general Editorial Office in Copenhagen.

The journal will publish articles on topics of importance to librarians and to anybody interested in books, more especially matters concerning National Libraries, University Libraries and learned libraries generally.

The articles, reviews, notes and other communications will be printed in English, French or German. The main part of the journal will be devoted to original papers on all aspects of librarianship, including the history of books and of publishing.

No payment is made for contributions, but the author will receive 25 reprints free of charge.

The annual subscription rate for the journal will be about 37s. Each issue will have approximately 96 pages.

Two supplemental series will be issued, prices to be fixed separately. These will comprise papers too long to be included in the Review.

Honorary Editors already appointed include Dr. L. Brummel of the Royal Library, The Hague ; Dr Svend Dahl, State Librarian, Copenhagen ; Mr F. C. Francis, Keeper of Printed Books, British Museum ; Dr F. Kleberg, Director, University Library, Upsala ; Mr J. Metcalfe, Principal Librarian, Public Library of New South Wales ; Dr S. R. Ranganathan, of Delhi ; Dr J. Stummoll, of the National Library, Vienna, and Dr W. S. Wallace, Librarian, University of Toronto Library.

The Hon. Editor for South Africa, Mr D. H. Varley, will be glad to receive contributions from South African librarians, which should be sent in the first instance c/o The South African Public Library, Cape Town.

It is hoped to publish the first number of this journal early in 1950 .

## PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICE POINTS IN LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUMS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

O. H. SPOHR<sup>1</sup>

IN APRIL, 1946, a small group of librarians, assistants and library students assembled in Stellenbosch to talk about microfilm and the library. At this stage all of us present were more or less newcomers in a field of a unique application of a specialized branch of photography. It appeared to us somewhat foreign in the world of books. The camera has been used in libraries practically from the day that photography was invented, but I do not think I am far wrong in saying that photographic methods were looked upon as a very occasionally used technical help and only for valuable manuscript and picture material.

The annual conference of the South African Library Association in 1946 devoted a certain amount of its time to discussing photographic reproduction and preservation methods. The number of papers on these subjects read at this conference gives us a clear indication that many South African libraries realized the importance of this new service in the library field. As with nearly every invention, there are two opposing camps : the one will contain the apostles who are inclined to over-emphasize the value of any invention, or, in other words, they cannot imagine a library any more unless it contains so many thousand feet of microfilm and a microfilm reader in every corner. Then there is the camp consisting of the more conservative ones who feel that an inch of film, a photographic copy, or anything like it, are something alien in the domain of their beloved books.

Obviously both camps overshoot the mark. Microfilm editions should, and most likely will, always remain only a *substitute* for material that is either difficult to obtain or not available at all. Film will never supersede book material as such. To imagine a library consisting of neatly boxed microfilm alone is feasible, and in some rare circumstances possibly desirable, but, on the whole, a Utopia—an incongruous development—a sin against the spirit embodied in the printed book. But to deprive readers of material often available in photographic form only must be considered against the spirit of our times, a severe violation of our service principles. The all too over-optimistic adherents of super-modern methods could devote some of their enthusiasm to making converts of the too conservative librarians, and they in turn could put a careful brake on any efforts of those who overrate the use of technical gadgets.

<sup>1</sup> Paper read *in absentia* by Mr. Franklin H. Rooke at the South African Library Association's Annual Conference in Pretoria, 1949.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICE POINTS IN LIBRARIES

One of the main and often justified objections to photographic methods in library work is the high cost. We should, however, realize that the more libraries join the growing brotherhood of microfilmers, the cheaper will become the membership fee, or, in other words, the more will benefit from this technical additional service. However strong our feelings may be against or for technical inventions, it should remain quite clear that microfilm and other photographic reproduction and preservation methods are something additional or something new to be used besides what we have had so far, but they would never become the thing itself.

The South African Library Association asked me to participate in a discussion on microfilm and allied subjects at this conference. I found that up to now only the South African C.S.I.R. Library and Information Division had issued a short list "Microfilm for the South African Scientist". This list was compiled in May, 1947. Well over two years have elapsed since then, and I thought it would be useful to make an enquiry into photographic reproduction services in South Africa. The aim was to find out who is offering photographic services not only to its own institution, but also who is willing and equipped to offer such services to others. To find as many service points as possible, the enquiry was extended to libraries, archives, museums and galleries in South Africa.

A circular was prepared and was sent to some 60 addresses. Nearly all the circulars were returned, most of them bringing comprehensive information. It appears that practically all the larger centres of South Africa are in some form or other equipped to make photographic reproductions of other material, and most of them seem to be willing and prepared to extend these facilities to other institutions as well. The possibilities for inter-library loan enter a period of far greater scope than ever before. Most libraries, museums and archives hold material which for many reasons cannot leave the premises, or for which, as we know, in many cases the postage costs would be prohibitive. The growing demand for microfilm or photostat copies, as experienced, for instance, by the Photographic Department of the University of Cape Town libraries, is proof enough for an extension of this method of inter-library loan.

The circular enquired into several points :

- (a) *Does your institution supply* photographic copies of your material, maintain a photographic service for this purpose or use the facilities of any commercial firm(s).
- (b) *Into details of your own service*, such as equipment, type of material handled, staff. Is your service only for your own use or also open to other institutions ? What material can be obtained, in which form and at what prices.
- (c) *Do you have any reproduction projects*, such as newspaper files, etc.,

## SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEKE

and do you intend to make copies of such items available to other institutions?

- (d) To what extent *do you use overseas documentary reproduction services?*
- (e) Have you any projection facilities?
- (f) Have you any photographic picture collections and any Ciné film and film strip collections?

The results of this enquiry are, of course, far too detailed to read as a paper, but we give here a rough summary of the situation in October, 1949:

18 libraries, museums and archives are photographically equipped and 17 use the service of other institutions or commercial firms. Where an institution has its own Department and uses outside sources as well it has been accounted for in the first figure. Of these 35 some 22 extend their photographic services to others, and some 13 only in special circumstances. 9 use overseas documentary reproduction services. 10 have their own microfilm readers, 13 possess Ciné film projectors, 12 have lantern slide and film strip projectors, 7 use Epidiascopes.

Only some 23 gave details about their picture collections, so here we are sure there must be many more. To possess one's own Ciné film and film strips seems to be rather the exception and only 6 institutions replied in the positive. A complete nil return was received from 7 libraries and museums. There are also 4 more institutions given in the C.S.I.R. list from whom we have received no reply yet.

There seem to be 5 institutions in South Africa planning or already undertaking large microfilm projects. The Central African Archives in Salisbury have attached a microfilm photographer to the editor touring Europe to collect Central African material in European Archives. The Durban Municipal Library has already on microfilm various newspaper files and so has the South African Library. Johannesburg Public Library plans to microfile certain newspaper files, while the University of Cape Town Library entertains the idea of microfilming selected thesis material. With the exception of the microfiled newspaper files of the Durban Municipal Library, of which copies can be bought, the other institutions have not quite decided yet if, how, and when copies of the microfilmed material will be available to others.

*Note:* The University of Cape Town Library has now issued, in stencilled form, a *Directory of Photographic Service Points*, price 2s. Orders may be sent to the Librarian.

## BOEKE ONTVANG

**NISSING, C. J. (Samesteller).** *Nederlandse biblioteekgids . . . 4de druk.* Amsterdam, Swetz en Zeitlinger, 1949.

Hierdie is die vierde druk van die adresboek van biblioteke in Nederland. Dis 'n nuwe bewerking van die derde uitgawe wat in 1931 verskyn het en wat toe besonderhede aangaande 632 biblioteke bevat het—dit het nou gestyg na 976. Die gegewens is in sommige opsigte egter meer beperk as die 1931-uitgawe, want in hoofsaak is weggedoen met die literatuur oor die geskiedenis van elke instelling. Van die personeel is in die reël ook slegs dié vermeld wat 'n selfstandige wetenskaplike of administratiewe funksie vervul. Enkele nuwe gegewens kom nietemin nou weer by, soos bv. watter biblioteke een van die sentrale katalogi huisves. 'n Beknopte opgawe van organisasies, besture en kommissies op die gebied van die Nederlandse biblioteekwese is ook inbegrepe, soos o.a. die volgende : „Rijkscommissie van advies inzake het Bibliotheekwezen“ „Centrale Vereniging voor Openbare Leeszalen en Bibliotheken“, waaronder ook die „Inspecteur“ (Dr. H. E. Greve) en die „Commissie voor die Opleidingscursussen“ val. Dan is daar nog die „Nederlandse Vereniging van Bibliothecarissen“ met sy baie vertakkings, die „Centrale Vereniging voor Reizende Bibliotheken“, asook die „Commissie voor Bibliotheekwezen van de Mij. tot Nut van 't Algemeen“. Die rangskikking is in die eerste plek alfabetties volgens dorp. Die tyd sal aanbreek en is ook nie meer ver nie, dat ons ons eie biblioteekgids sal hê. Ek glo dat die gegewens oor die belangrikste openbare biblioteke wat in *Suid-Afrikaanse Biblioteke* verskyn die begin daarvan is.

S. J. K.

**SCIENCE in South Africa.** Pretoria, South African council for scientific and industrial research, 1949. 176pp. illus. 10s.

This brochure gives a broad picture of science and its applications in South Africa since the days of the first European settlement at the Cape. It was prepared primarily for the information of delegates attending the African Regional Scientific Conference in October, 1949, and librarians should find it a very handy overall survey of the field. There is a large number of interesting illustrations.

**WARD, J. Carlton, jr.** The economic consequences of air power . . . with introductory remarks by Luther H. Evans. Washington, Library of Congress, 1949. 31p. (Copies obtainable free on application to the Publications Section, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D.C.)

## U.N.E.S.C.O. FELLOWSHIPS AS A TOOL FOR RECONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARIES

THE THREE SESSIONS of the General Conference of U.N.E.S.C.O. at Paris, Mexico City and Beirut, instructed the Director-General "to promote the development of public libraries in Member States as centres for popular education and the growth of international understanding". Public libraries, along with other cultural institutions, suffered great loss during the war years and the reconstruction and development of libraries is thus the major task of U.N.E.S.C.O.'s Division of Libraries.

U.N.E.S.C.O.'s fellowship programme in the field of Librarianship is very specifically a projection and general implementation of U.N.E.S.C.O.'s libraries programme. Through its fellowships for public librarians, U.N.E.S.C.O. aims at establishing "advance posts" and "contact points" for U.N.E.S.C.O.'s programme in the library systems of its Member States. At least one U.N.E.S.C.O.-financed fellowship was offered in 1948 to eleven war-devastated Member States of U.N.E.S.C.O. in the field of librarianship.

Miss S. Peppa, Secretary, General Library Council, Athens, Greece, was the recipient of such a U.N.E.S.C.O. fellowship. She began her work at the U.N.E.S.C.O. Summer School of Libraries and, writing from the school, she said : "To reorganize our complex of libraries, a draft law which foresees the unitary organization of central libraries in every capital of district is being proposed. These should extend over various parts in the same district through branch-libraries. Unfortunately the realization of this project has been prevented on account of economic adversities. In spite of all this, and as the Greek people show a keen interest in keeping the old tradition of intellectual life in the provinces, the General Council of Libraries in Greece has suggested to the Ministry of National Education the founding of the two first public libraries in the islands of Aegina and Crete (Rethymnon) on the basis of a Royal decree. In this way these libraries will serve both the learning youth and the public. Another subject which the Greek Government has to consider is the founding of those libraries which have been destroyed completely because of the war (Corfou, Chania, Jannina, Cavalla, etc.). Only the hope that the present abnormal situation in Greece will soon come to an end creates the indispensable atmosphere. It is of optimism to those who have undertaken the task to rehabilitate the Greek libraries and it is our wish that this rehabilitation will have a broader influence in favour of a development of a peaceful and international understanding among the peoples of the United Nations..."

Miss J. R. Wolff, Chief Librarian, Children's Department, Public Library, The Hague, Netherlands, was another U.N.E.S.C.O. fellow who undertook a programme of study and observation in the United States and Canada.

Mr. A. Andreassen, Librarian at the Rjukan Public Library, Rjukan, Norway, held a U.N.E.S.C.O. Reconstruction fellowship in the United States with the object of preparing himself further "to work for the development of public libraries in Norway especially for library work for public adult education". He is the Norwegian member of the Inter-Scandinavian Committee on Public Libraries and was responsible for planning and leading an inter-Scandinavian course for Public Librarians in Norway in 1948.

Mr. C. K. Koziol, Inspector of Libraries, Ministry of Education, Warsaw, Poland, and Miss S. Wortman, Head, Children's Library, Warsaw, Poland, were also holders of U.N.E.S.C.O. fellowships in librarianship.

# AFDELING SPESIALE BIBLIOTEKE

S.A.B.V. *Suid-Transvaalse Tak*

Deel 3

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## SPECIAL LIBRARIES IN SOUTH AFRICA

### VII. THE SCOPE OF THE AFRICAN MUSIC RESEARCH LIBRARY, JOHANNESBURG

JANE M. McCRINDELL

THE AFRICAN Music Research Library is in the process of being built up for the special use of those people who are interested in this subject.

At present the books, periodicals, etc., are available for reference purposes only to Members of the African Music Research Staff and to the African Music Society. They may not be taken away from the Library.

The Library contains at present nearly 300 books, which includes a dozen books of reference, 50 or more pamphlets on subjects within the scope of the Research, and a number of periodicals connected with the subject of the Research, such as *Africa*, *Race Relations News*, *Journal of the International Folk Music Council*, *African Studies*, etc. There is also a small technical magazine section connected with phonographic recording, containing such periodicals as *Electronics* and *Wireless World*.

The books in the Library, though mostly in English, include some in Afrikaans, French, Portuguese and various native languages such as Sotho and Zulu, and they contain information on most Bantu African territories, including opinion from the United Kingdom, the United States, Europe, Australia, South America and West Africa.

There are at present seven subject divisions of books, Linguistic, Anthropological, Tribal Music and Dancing, Sociological, Administrative, Political and Historical, Art, Lore and Folk Tales. It is often difficult to allocate a book to any particular division, when it covers more than one of these subjects, and a General section to cover books of this type will probably have to be added later.

On the catalogue cards are found such "bread and butter" information as author, title, publisher, price and the date the book was added to the Library.

We are mostly asked by members of the staff and of the Society, not for the name of a book, but for a quick brief reference to some special subject, such as the Shembe Festival, the use of a certain African instrument in an African dance. For this reason Mr Hugh Tracey, who collected the nucleus of the Library, on

## SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEKE

reading each book has made a specialized index of references to African music and art in the back of the book. As the Library grows larger, it will be necessary to detail one person to do this, in order to keep pace with information as it becomes available. Concrete facts about African music and dancing are not easily obtainable, and we must necessarily buy books containing quite an amount of irrelevant information which is not directly concerned with our subject. We obtain regular catalogues from several booksellers, but titles are sometimes misleading, and it is difficult to know always without first seeing a book on approval that it is actually suitable for our Library. There has been plenty of "sentimental" writing on our subject but little scientific work.

We are sometimes asked for the musical score of African songs, and people are surprised to find that we cannot provide them with it; so far a little has been written in staff notation and in tonic solfa, but neither is an entirely suitable medium. African songs are sung in modes peculiar to their various tribes, none of which fit into our tempered scale. Consequently, neither our staff nor syllabic notation is suitable and may do more harm than good. Members of the African Music Society are working on the problem of suitable notations for African music, but, in the meantime, we recommend the passing on of African songs by direct contact, either from singer to singer, or by listening to gramophone records. Every item of African music already transcribed in our notations is but an approximation.

At present we take daily cuttings from three Johannesburg English newspapers as well as various Bantu ones from within the Union and Southern Rhodesia, in addition to articles and paragraphs from other overseas sources which are brought to our notice. There are few at present of any real value to our subject; they consist mostly of "news" items about books or cultural events organized for the social benefit of Africans.

The *Newsletter* of the African Music Society, which is issued biennially, contains reviews on books of interest to our members, and a list of books recently added to the Library. The African Music Society's other publications, i.e. books or monographs, are available for sale at the African Music Society Headquarters, with special discount to Members. Other books (such as *Ngoma—an introduction to African Music*) relevant to our subject, are also available for sale to interested persons.

African Music Research has laid the foundations of a comprehensive Library of gramophone records of indigenous African and Euro-African music, with a classified index showing amongst others the details of the tribe, performers and subject of the song. We also have the nucleus of a photographic library and the beginnings of a collection of African instruments. Each of these sections will be coded in conjunction with our Classification of Bantu Languages, so that all parts of the Library will be coordinated with each other.

## NOTES AND NEWS

### SPECIAL LIBRARIES ROUND TABLE

During the Annual Conference of the South African Library Association held in Pretoria in early November, 1949, the special and university librarians present got together for a round table conference on special library problems. The discussion was led by the Librarian of the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research and some 25 people attended, including a group from the Special Libraries Section of the Southern Transvaal Branch of the Association. Problems discussed included principles of discarding, indexes to South African newspapers, methods of securing return of journals to the library, subject headings for periodicals, the work of the South African Documentation Committee, etc., etc.

### AFRICAN REGIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

The African Regional Scientific Conference which was held in Johannesburg in October, 1949, devoted some of its time to the consideration of special library problems. A paper on *Scientific and Technical Library and Information Services in the Union of South Africa* by Hazel Mews and S. J. Kritzinger was presented at a joint meeting of all sections of the Conference.

### RUSSIAN TRANSLATIONS

The Keeper of the Science Museum Library, South Kensington, S.W. 7, invites all organizations preparing translations of Russian scientific or technical articles to forward one copy of the translation to the Science Museum Library. Each translation forwarded should carry the transliterated title of the periodical in which the original article appeared. Should an organization desire to keep its interest confidential it can request the Library not to disclose the origin of such translations. While the Library will not undertake to receive any or every translation independently of quality or condition it will not be responsible for the scientific accuracy of the translations. Translations accepted will be catalogued and listed in the Accessions List issued by the Science Library and, subject to any reservation of copyright, may be obtained through the photocopying service.

### RUSSIAN PERIODICALS: TRANSLATED CONTENTS LISTS

The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research in London is issuing *Translated Contents Lists of Russian Periodicals*. Up to September, 1949 (i.e. as we go to press), four issues have appeared. The object of this series is to collect together, and make more generally available, translated contents lists of Russian scientific and technical periodicals. A number of organizations have co-operated in the work of translation and non-co-operating organizations who are able and willing to contribute to the series by translating contents lists are invited to write to D.S.I.R. (Intelligence 1, D.S.I.R., Rex House, 4-12 Regent Street, London, S.W. 1.)

The Library and Information Division of the South African Council for Scientific and Industrial Research receives regularly a copy of the *Translated Contents Lists*.

## SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEKE

### ARTICLES ON ANALYTICAL CHEMISTRY

Rather an interesting article appeared in *The Chemist Analyst* for March 1949, entitled "Domestic and Foreign Publications in the Field of Analytical Chemistry : a Statistical Survey". The author, F. S. Boig, has made a survey of the abstracts published in the Analytical section of *Chemical Abstracts* for two complete years, 1947 (representing a postwar year) and 1937 (a prewar year). The abstracts were searched for number of articles, number of journals, names of journals, country of journal and language of publication.

The tabulated results are interesting. In 1937, Russia supplied the greatest number of abstracted articles, with Germany next, followed by the United States and then by England. In 1947, the United States leads by a comfortable majority, followed by Russia, Japan and then England. The figure for Japan, in 1947, is not representative of its actual output as the abstracts cover the period 1941-46 when material was not available due to the war.

The important foreign journals are : for Russia, *Zavodskaya Laboratoriya* ; for Japan, the *Journal of the Chemical Society of Japan* ; for England, *The Analyst*. French analytical chemists do not seem to have any one favourite journal, most analytical articles appearing in *Comptes rendus* and *Chimie analytique*. It seems hardly necessary to add that the American paper *Analytical Chemistry* heads the list with its remarkable productivity.

### TRAINING OF INFORMATION OFFICERS

The training of information officers has received a good deal of attention recently and the 1948 Annual Conference of Aslib included a symposium on the subject. Aslib's own proposals were used as a basis for discussion and the syllabus envisaged by Aslib for the qualifying examination included :

1. Methods of dissemination and presentation of information, including abstracting, editorial, reference and enquiry work, selection of information, etc.
2. Organization and administration of information departments.
3. Bibliography and documentary reproduction.
4. Principles of classification and cataloguing.

### BOOKS

**Directory** of scientific, technical and medical libraries in the Union of South Africa ; edited for the South African library association by Hazel Mews and P. E. Krige. Pretoria, South African council for scientific and industrial research, 1949. "Preliminary edition." Stencilled.

This is the first part of a directory of special libraries in South Africa whose compilation was suggested at the 1947 Conference of the South African Library Association in Cape Town. The arrangement of the Directory is alphabetical by the name of the library ; a geographical index, arranged under Provinces, brings together the names of special libraries in each town in the Union and a subject index indicates the broad subject covered by each library. Seventy special libraries are listed.

# AFDELING SKOOL- EN KINDERBIBLIOTEKE

*Suid-Afrikaanse Biblioteekvereniging*

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## LIBRARIES FROM THE TEACHER'S POINT OF VIEW

W. M. MURRAYBROWN<sup>1</sup>

I SHOULD first like to clarify the subject of this talk, for myself as much as anybody. "Libraries from the teacher's point of view." This is a very wide subject. There are many educational walks trodden by teachers, all the way from the nursery school to the university, and for any person to give a comprehensive survey in an address such as this is impossible.

I feel, therefore, it is necessary that I make clear the range within which I am going to deal with libraries and teaching. I am myself a primary school teacher and all my experience has been in that type of school. Therefore, with your permission, I am going to deal with the subject from that aspect only and perhaps, if any discussion follows, there will be others present who will fill in the highlights from other branches of my profession.

Then again I don't think the sponsors of this evening's symposium meant the title to be taken in its literal meaning. In putting down "Libraries from the teacher's point of view" they in truth meant libraries from the pupil's angle—that is, libraries as an instrument of education in the school.

Here also, then, I want permission to deal with the subject from a particular aspect. I intend discussing libraries as a teaching asset, a "tool for education", if you like ; something that can be used by the primary school teacher and pupil as a means to acquiring those experiences that prepare for life.

Sir Richard Livingstone, in his book *The Future of Education*, opens his first chapter with the question "Why are we an uneducated nation and how can we become an educated one ?" He speaks, of course, particularly of the British Isles, but his question could be applied to our own and many other countries with equal force.

Sir Richard is not being humorous or sarcastic. He asks his question really as a truth, for the whole of his book presents his solution to this problem. He feels that it is not for lack of educational effort that we are an uneducated people. In fact, in his opening paragraph, he points out that there is compulsory

<sup>1</sup> Read at the South African Library Association's Annual Conference in Pretoria, 1949.

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education, fine schools, trained teachers and in some fortunate places even fat educational budgets. What he thinks is that our expensive educational system has degenerated into an examination-ridden routine and has consequently lost effectiveness and meaning.

Later in his book Livingstone defines in two sentences what he believes are the essential attributes of a successful education, and it is in these, if I may be allowed to steal the thunder of the pulpit, that I find my text. "The test of a successful education", says Livingstone, "is not the amount of knowledge that a pupil takes away from school, but is his appetite to know and his capacity to learn. If a school sends out children with a desire for knowledge and some idea of how to acquire it and use it, it will have done its work."

Ladies and gentlemen, where, of all aspects of school organization, can children who are encouraged to maintain a desire for knowledge acquire it and use it? Where can they get away from Livingstone's "dull routine" of our educational system and develop educatively for themselves? I can think of only one place, an adequate library. It is here that the child has an opportunity to get away from abstract learning and discover for himself the world in which he is to live.

All this is very comforting. Provide a library and the child slips out of the rut. Unfortunately, however, before a library becomes an effective educative tool there are a number of "buts" to be faced.

I have said that in a library the child can call on the best that humanity has to offer. He can only do this, however, provided he knows how to use the means available. I also said an "adequate" library is necessary. Are we quite sure that we know what we mean by "library" and "adequate" and "use"?

There is to-day some confusion as to what constitutes a school library. The usual definition is "a collection of books". And what kind of books? Generally, stories, novels, tales; the best, of course, what is called "literature", so that the library can influence the literary tastes of its users.

In general the argument for this type of school library goes something like this: Willie is now able to read. He will, by the natural devilment in him, incline to "comics". Therefore it is the duty of the school to show him the error of his ways. It must be done indirectly by introducing him to better books. So we bring this unwilling horse to the purer literary water of the school's library shelves and hope he will drink. If he does not, bad luck! But the library will have done its bit and fulfilled its function.

The accumulation of such a collection of books and from only such an aspect shows an ignorance of the true meaning of the word "library". Such a collection is only one facet of a library—mainly recreational reading. Important I do not deny, as the best in literature is the fountain of the loftier ideals. But a library by its oldest meaning is much more than that. In its essence it should be a collec-

## LIBRARIES FROM THE TEACHER'S POINT OF VIEW

tion of material from which we can acquire knowledge, and that is by far its most important function. Yet it is one which is sadly neglected in the schools at the present time.

The second "but" that we have to face is the meaning, in its library sense, of the word "adequate". When we do place a library in the primary school which will really fulfil its function as a source of knowledge as well as a collection of recreational reading, what is it to contain?

Here also I feel that there is a lack of appreciation of the proper meaning of a library. Knowledge does not only come out of books. There are other sources—articles, pictures, the strip film, the silent and sound cinema film and even the gramophone record. While books that present the various branches of knowledge in sufficient simplicity to be understood by the primary school pupil are limited in number, we should realize that the primary child is at that stage where he more readily assimilates knowledge through eye and ear. Therefore we can build up in his library a large quantity of reference material that will cater for these media of experience, rather more so than will reference books. An adequate Primary school library must therefore include this type of material.

The third "but" that must be understood if the library is to be of educative value in the primary school is an appreciation of the meaning of the word "use". There are two aspects of this, "use" as applied to the educative process going on inside the school and "use" in its practical sense—that is the method by which the pupil can readily call on the library material when he wants it.

"Use" from the educative angle is to my mind where the reference library for the primary school meets its greatest—I will not say "opposition" because I do not believe any good teacher wilfully opposes any advance in the educative process—perhaps "hurdle" is the best word. Teaching practice is slowly getting away from instruction. We lead to-day rather than enforce learning; but the greatest barrier to this liberal trend is the examination system, where liberal teaching has to give way to grind—Livingstone's "dull routine".

If you cannot lead children in their learning then you cannot indulge in the luxury of a reference library, because the grinding process cannot—in fact dare not—permit the time for such self-search, with its possibility that the child might in so doing stray from the narrow path set by the examination syllabus and so "waste" time gaining some additional knowledge that is not to be examined.

The very basis of the liberal system of guidance in educating children is activity work. To use what has become an educational cliché, children learn by doing. They acquire the *habit* of gaining knowledge by being given the opportunity for self-solution of problems and difficulties which they meet up with. The teacher guidance comes in seeing that their problems are met with in planned order and that their inexperienced attempts at solution are led along definite lines.

As I asked further back, where can children with a desire for the knowledge

## SUID-AFRIKAANSE BIBLIOTEKE

needed to meet these problems get it? Where else but from amongst the school's collection of library material? The teacher-librarian first collates the material necessary for the particular project the class teacher is to work on; the class teacher in her turn presents the material with its hints of associated problems to be solved; and the child then actively sets about solving its difficulties, either with the material already collated by the teacher-librarian, or with material it finds itself by the proper use of the organized facilities of its school library.

This brings me to the second meaning of the word "use": its relation to the abilities of the child to get at the material it needs in the library. Here I enter a realm in which, to be candid, I am the veriest novice—that mysterious land of cataloguing and classification. Probably because ignorance is bliss, I am, however, going to tilt at you experts, for I believe that here is a rock that might endanger the whole good of libraries in the primary school.

I am fully aware of the essential nature of cataloguing and classification, and that the Dewey system, the one used throughout this country, is built on sound foundations which a tyro like me would do well not to tamper with. I know this, but my complaint is that the children who will be using the school library do not know it, and while they can appreciate the need for some system of classification, that system must not be too complicated if they are not to lose heart. For the primary school I would suggest doing without Dewey numbers at all. Let us stick to such of the Dewey headings as are useful within the primary school limits and found in the first hundred divisions, and then file subject, title and author cards and any cross-reference cards in alphabetical order behind each of these divisions.

Such a simplified system would be ample for primary school pupils to get their bearings on such material as they are likely to be brought into contact with. When they get to the "bigger library" stage, it should then not be very difficult for them to expand the feeling for orderliness already acquired in the primary school and to accept the more complicated decimal system.

I might add that from the little work I have been able to do in the small library we are getting together in my school no child from nine upwards finds any difficulty in valuing and understanding a filing card system. Standard 5 and Standard 6 children are themselves doing the cataloguing under the guidance of members of the staff, and are quite at home when looking through for anything they need. It is only where the making out of these cards and the subsequent reference to them involves a complicated definition of the contents of the book or material in terms of numbers that they fall down on the job.

In this brief address on a subject that must, as I said at the start, cover by the very nature of the meaning of the word "education" a very wide field, I have tried to bring before you attitudes I consider essential to library work if it is to play a lead in the primary school. I have tried to show that a "library" must be

## **LIBRARIES FROM THE TEACHER'S POINT OF VIEW**

understood to cover more than recreational reading and literature; it must be a source of information. Secondly that it must be planned specifically for its purpose ; by that is meant it must convey information, in as many different ways as possible and not just by books, and its contents must not be in any way above the heads of the children who will use it. And thirdly it must be used in tune with the activity work of the pupils and be so organized that its system of arrangement is within the grasp of primary school children.

I believe an adequate school library can play a role that reaches right through life. I am informed that the adult education movement finds as its greatest problem the attraction of adults back to worthwhile matters, even when these matters are in their own interests. I think the reason for this is because, to them, the term "education" is so linked, quite frankly, with the "dull routine" of examination -ridden school days that they hedge at voluntarily placing themselves again within the confines of that boring waste.

But suppose these same adults had been brought up on the Livingstone formula ? Suppose that their school days had sent them out into the world not with pieces of parchment recording the amount of knowledge that examinations had recorded they had acquired but with an "appetite to know and a capacity to learn"—and some idea of where and how to acquire knowledge and use it. In other words, from their primary school years and onwards they had been brought up to regard a library of referable information and the habit of using it not only as an asset but as a right for all time. I wonder then how the adult movement would have fared ?

Personally, I do not think there would have been any suggestion that an adult education "movement" should be "raised". Would it not have been already in practice by its own volition anyway ?

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### **AFDELING SKOOL— EN KINDERBIBLIOTEKE**

#### **NOORD-TRANSVAALSE TAK**

Ons verwelkom die Noord-Transvaalse Tak van die Afdeling, wat herlewe het. Die ampsdraers is :

*Voorsitster:* Mev. E. C. de Wet.

*Vise-voorsitter:* Mnr. H. J. B. Combrink.

*Mede Ere-Sekretarisse:* Mej. E. J. R. Dixon en Mnr. J. J. van Staden, Staatsbiblioteek, Pretoria.

*Komiteelede:* Mnr. D. Malan en Mev. M. Rautenbach (verteenwoordiger van Noord-Transvaalse Tak, S.A.B.V.)

*Gekoöpteer:* Mnr. H. C. Hayman en Mnr. J. L. van Heerden.

## SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES

### QUESTIONNAIRE ON CHILDREN'S READING

Miss Elizabeth Taylor, of the Cape Town University Library, has collaborated with *Child Welfare* in the drawing up of a questionnaire on children's reading tastes. We have no space in this issue to reproduce the whole questionnaire, but would refer readers to the October, 1949, issue of *Child Welfare*. Answers to the questionnaire are asked to be sent to Box 6624, Johannesburg, by the end of May, 1950.

### CHILD PSYCHOLOGY AND READING

Under the somewhat ponderous title of "Child Psychology with Reference to the Reading Interests of Children" the *Library Association record* for August 1949 prints a delightful résumé of a lecture by Mrs. M.V.W. Cooke given at a week-end course on Children's Work to the Lancashire Country Library Staff. It concludes : "Like parsons and teachers, librarians can never tell the effects of their efforts, nor measure any visible reward. One question only remains, and it is personal indeed—"Is it worth attempting?"

### PLAN FOR SCHOOL LIBRARIES

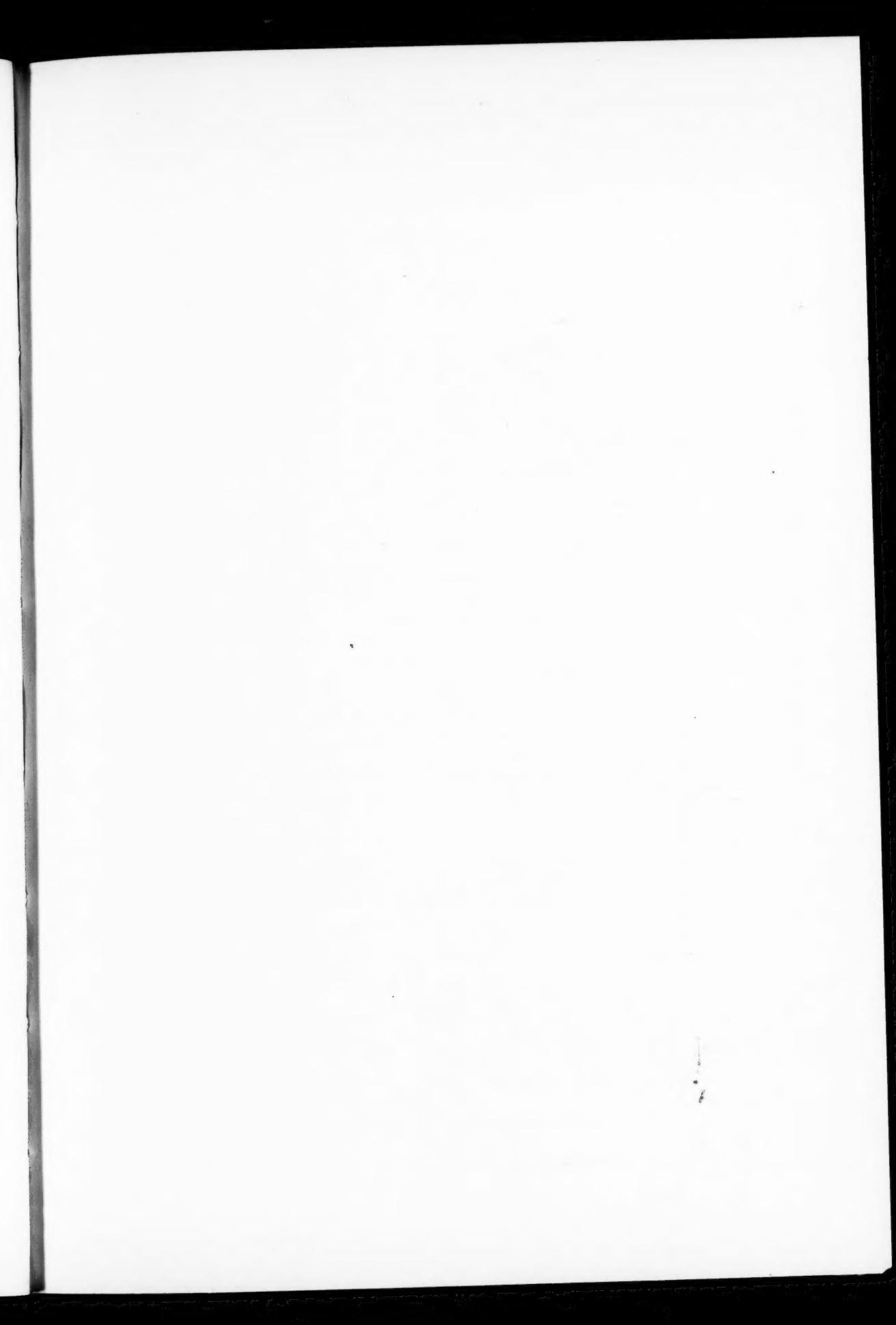
The recommendations of the Sub-Committee appointed by the Cape Provincial Library Committee on School Libraries are reviewed in an article called *Plan for School Libraries* in the September, 1949 (vol. 59, no. 9) issue of *Education*.

### A SCHOOL LIBRARY IN NEW ZEALAND

An article on "An Intermediate School Library", by Bryan Pinder, appeared in the August, 1949, issue of *New Zealand libraries* (col. 12. no. 7). It gives a very interesting account of the steps taken by the Christchurch South Intermediate School (500 pupils) to develop an effective library service. The practical details given should be helpful to teacher-librarians facing similar problems.

### BOYS' FAVOURITES

"What's Happened to Boys' Favourites?" W. W. Charters asks this question in an interesting article in the *Library journal* (74(18) 1577 f. 15 October, 1949). He finds that, according to his investigations in American children's libraries, only three books have been best-sellers for forty years ; they are *Huckleberry Finn*, *Tom Sawyer* and *Treasure Island*.



# SOUTH AFRICAN LIBRARIES



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